

Chlorination Vaults For Midway Springs

10-1-03

\$64,000 for Gerber Springs. The total bid for the Chlorination Vault project is \$131,200. This puts chlorine and power to both vaults."

Johnson said, "The vaults will be placed at ground level to make it easy to wheel in the chlorine from a truck or handcart, right into the room."

Mayor Bill Probst said, "I recommend to the council that we get right after this as soon as possible, it's something that needs to be done."

Colleen Bonner made the motion to accept the bid of JB Gordon Construction and authorize them to begin the installation. The council voted unanimously to approve the Chlorination Vault project.

What Went Wrong? Controlled Burn Blazes Out of Control

Service went ahead with the burn, not because the prescription was right, but because "they were up against a bureaucratic timeline."

Young said, "They had a burn plan in place that covered a five-year span from 1999 to 2003. Getting that plan in place is a lengthy process in itself. They planned on burning 3,800 acres. They were able to burn in 2,000 but they missed their window in 2001 and 2002. They were at the loose end of their five-year plan."

Young also contends that the Forest Service allowed the fire to burn out of control. "They say the conditions were perfect, I find that suspect." He said the Tuesday burn pattern shows the fire was uncontrolled from the start. "I think they wanted to meet their burn goals of 3,800 acres. To accomplish that, they let it burn," Young said.

Local firefighters were told to cancel their response to calls about the fire. "They called us off because it was a controlled burn. But if we'd kept going, we'd arrived just at about the time it went out of control. We could have stopped it," said Ernie Giles, Wasatch County Fire Chief.

Thomas said the Forest Service had nothing to gain by violating their own regulations. "This is a laborious process, taking more than a year or two to put this all together. We can't just let a burn go. If any one little thing didn't meet the prescription we'd have shut it down."

Thomas said their jobs are on the line if a review finds violations were made.

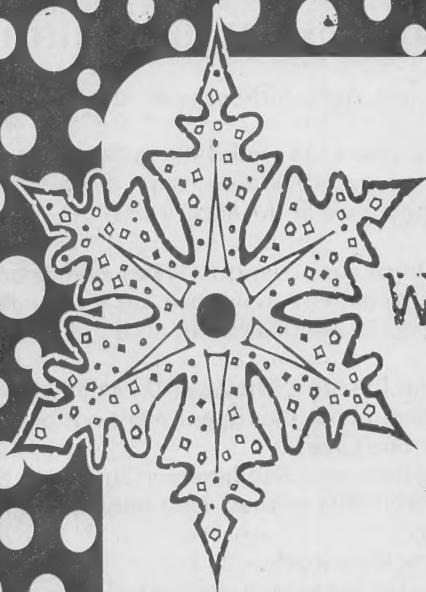
Thomas said extreme measures are taken to ensure prescribed burns are kept under control. Before the burn is given a "go," the burn boss and a district ranger have to sign off on the project.

For the Cascade Springs II fire, the burn boss and the district ranger were the same person. Thomas called this coincidence "unusual."

Thomas said the original 600-acre prescribed burn was budgeted to cost \$58,000. As the week-long fire slowly approaches full containment, the cost is estimated to exceed \$1.6 million.

Wave photos by Dick Buys

Hunter Carl Bennion was reunited with his family after spending a night lost in the Strawberry Reservoir area. Above: A search dog used to locate Bennion is desensitized to Bennion's scent. Bennion allowed the dog to "find" him so the dog would understand the search was completed.



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